

# LITERARY NEWS, VIEWS AND CRITICISM

## NEW BOOKS.

### Missionaries in Persia.

An uncommon story, told with much skill, and preaching a sermon which will impress the reader, is Rachel Capen Schaffer's "The Goodly Fellowship" (Macmillan). A rich young woman from New York society is landed abruptly at a missionary station in northwestern Persia, where weather conditions compel her to make a prolonged stay. She has no sympathy with the missionaries or their work, but her eyes are opened gradually to the good they do, the work in the hospitals, the teaching, the relief in time of famine, the material improvement of the community, and she takes a hand, as any wise man would, in the fight against savagery. The object of chief importance to the good people at home who support missions piously, the evangelic work among the natives, does not appeal to her; neither, apparently, does it to the author. This naturally strengthens her plea, as it passes by the side of mission work about which opinions may differ.

The shut in community is delightful. Strong and weak alike will attract the reader, for the portraits are so vivid that they seem like photographs, and the particular station is indicated so clearly that the author gives at times the impression of being indiscreetly frank. She shows their courage, their steadiness, the privations they suffer, the way in which they are neglected, and also, curiously enough, the scepticism with which some of them regard the worth of the people for whom they labor and the value of their conversions. They fight all the same because they know they are the outposts of a higher civilization. The moral lesson the worldly woman learns is an excellent bit of honest psychology; so is the reconciling of the hero to the work before him. There is plenty of humor as well as human nature in the other missionaries.

The story itself is entertaining enough to hold the reader's attention to the end, though he may easily find flaws in it. The heroine's venture alone into Persia may seem bold, even for the modern woman, and her rascally interpreter's powers for evil extraordinary in a creature of his type, but she has to be brought to the mission, and the way, so early life and consequent vindictiveness are rather surprising; they are apparently created merely to enforce the moral lesson. The more worldly minded may regret that she yields at once to her surroundings and does not test her love and her enthusiasm by returning to her own world for a while, before entering the missionary field; that would be more in harmony with the author's detached standpoint, though she acts as most women in love would act. The author has, however, brought the work of missionaries vividly before her readers, and in doing it has not forgotten that she is writing a novel.

**The Williamsons at Monte Carlo.**  
A personally conducted trip to Monte Carlo, that is by no means strenuous, though it takes up 633 pages, is offered to the readers of C. N. and A. M. Williamson's "The Guests of Hercules." They are taken to Roquebrune, to the suburbs of Nice, and above all to the roulette tables of the Casino, for the authors do not care for the other forms of gambling. There they will find a cosmopolitan company, in which the men are all gentlemen and the women, for the most part, cats. The book reads very easily; it is full of conversation about immaterial things to disguise the guide book portion.

The story tells the doings of a young woman brought up in a convent in conditions of ignorance about the world that would fit her for an asylum for the feeble minded. She undertakes to travel unaccompanied and aims straight for Monte Carlo, the one place she has been warned against. This is the only womanlike thing she does. Throughout she remains the incarnation of innocence and the magnet for men's devotion, though she does everything that would compromise other women. The story really ends when she has become engaged to an ardent Italian prince. It is dragged on for a couple of hundred pages, however, by a melodramatic intrigue, which seems to be an afterthought, as the incidents up to that point had been commonplace enough. The idea of killing a woman for her money by desperate gamblers we have met at least once before in recent fiction; it probably is derived from a common source. The author's heroine from more likely dangers.

### The Eternal Feminine.

It is a queer book that Mr. Will Levington Comfort has written, "Fate Knocks at the Door" (G. B. Lippincott Company), at moments plunging into mystical rhapsody and then turning to apparently unconscious absurdity. At times it will impress the reader as a severe attack of woman suffrage ideas, but it is interesting. The author begins with impressionistic fragments that shall throw light on the nature of his hero. He begins as a sea cook; a boy on a trading schooner is destroyed in a typhoon. Next he is coast for a pack train in the Philippines, then he wanders through the Orient and learns wisdom of a yogi in the Himalayas. At last he is called to a mythical island in the Caribbean and becomes master of great wealth. Through it all he holds fast to his ideals; his main inspirations are the memory of the mother he lost when a baby and the Bible; these Mr. Comfort combines into mystical assertions of the woman element in the Deity. The hero has some adventures with women, but his spirit is kept clean by the thought of his mother, that part of his story. The woman, however, does not find out till much later.

Thus equipped the hero is let loose on New York. Big things might be expected of something like an ideal spirit dealing with the materialistic age, but the author seems all at once and confines himself to knowing the effect on a small group of women, artists in one form or another. These, in spite of Mr. Comfort's grandiloquence, are plain, everyday women, acting from commonplace motives. The reader will be interested in them, but he will find little to justify the supernatural element in the hero. The woman he loves suspects him on slight grounds and that is enough to quench his passion. That, we should say, is the end of the hero's story. The human side disappears in the mystical, with much eloquent dissertation on femininity.

The realistic New York episode is followed by a fantastic and not very original series of romantic adventures in the Caribbean island. They introduce a capable young woman, they show the hero's

willingness to oblige the woman he has loved, but we fail to see in what way they improve his superhuman powers. The best he can do for the woman who could not trust him is to bestow on her an orphan baby to bring up. It seems rather prosaic business for either the idealistic sea cook or the future yogi to engage in, but he was to live up to the feminine gospel he had enunciated. We should not be surprised if a good many women took Mr. Comfort's theories seriously; he seems to do that himself.

### The International Year Book for 1911.

We welcome "The New International Year Book for 1911" which Prof. Frank Moore Colby and Mr. Allen Leon Churchill edit (Dodd, Mead and Company) for its own merits and also because, so far as we know, it has no competitor in its chosen field. The need of an encyclopedic summary of the work of each year is felt by every one who must use books of reference. Even when, with the passing of time, the year books are apparently obsolete and their contents have been absorbed in later encyclopedias, the necessity of consulting a chronological arrangement often arises, and even the old volumes of the "Annual Encyclopedia" which preceded the "New International" are in constant use. Later advance in knowledge does not do away with the usefulness of the year books. It is with regret that we look at the brief gap between the volumes of Prof. Colby's "International" and "New International" series; it should not have been permitted.

The volume for 1911 has all the merits of its predecessors; it summarizes briefly the events of the year in history and science; it uses many cross references; it is illustrated with valuable pictures and pertinent maps. The volume has a further advantage; though the number of pages is practically the same as in its predecessor, the employment of thinner paper has diminished the bulk by a third, which means a saving of shelf room and a more convenient book to handle. It is indispensable, for it is the only book of its kind to be had in English now.

### An Old Fashioned Critic.

It is refreshing to look over the list of authors about whom Mr. George Hamlin Fitch writes in "Modern English Books of Power" (Paul Elder and Company, San Francisco). They are all classics, and most of them further damned to modern readers by being used as texts in school or college. Mr. Fitch of course has nothing new to say, but he manages to express his appreciation of the great writers of the last century so pleasantly and so sanely that his readers will feel inclined to take the volumes from the shelves and look into them for once. He does not try to review all they have written, but merely talks of the two or three books by each one that he himself has liked best, and Mr. Fitch's taste is good.

Scott, Carlyle, De Quincey, Lamb, Dickens, Thackeray, and so on it is hard to say something sensible and interesting about them that is not obvious and hackneyed, but Mr. Fitch succeeds in doing it. The more modern portion of his galaxy is noticeable; it includes Meredith, Stevenson, Hardy and Kipling. Mr. Fitch does not include many poets in his list, only Tennyson and Browning, for he has the prose writers chiefly in mind. We are glad to see that he remembers Ruskin, who has fallen into disfavor of late, and that he does not include Omar Khayyam. Good, healthy book talks, all the better for being old fashioned. The volume is illustrated with excellent portraits and other pictures.

### Historical.

An entertaining and valuable book has been written by the Hon. T. T. Gordon, once Governor of the State, in "Fifty Years in Oregon" (The Neale Publishing Company). It is no history; for the author assumed that the reader knows something about the events he mentions, neither has he much to say about his State beyond the districts in which he lived, but his reminiscences of men and conditions provide pictures of life that are more real than any formal history can give. His people were among the first settlers, and in telling about them and their companions he digresses into family history, so that the first half of his book describes vividly the life of the pioneers not only in Oregon but in the Ohio Valley too. When he comes to the political life in which he was active he never dwells on the issues, he rarely criticizes individuals; he does not take his politics solemnly; he has no hesitation in telling a good story when the joke is against himself; he relates the details as incidents of life and not as historical evidence. He writes in a pleasant conversational style, that is a bit garrulous maybe, but always good natured and charitable to others. His story will naturally arouse most interest in Oregon, but it will be also thoroughly enjoyed by all Americans.

Another useful and interesting contribution to the history of the civil war comes from the Neale Publishing Company in the shape of "The War of the Sixties," compiled by Capt. E. R. Hutchins. This is a collection of a vast number of brief reminiscences, some taking up only half a page, none more than a few pages in length, from men of all ranks who served on either side. Some relate very slight incidents, others tell of more serious matters, but all have the quality in common that they contain personal impressions or experiences. The side-lights they throw on war are very interesting. While most of the stories have to do with the army, there are naval experiences also in the collection.

The Catholic order of the Sisters of Loretto, established in Kentucky, very recently celebrated its centenary. As a memorial Anna C. Minogue has written a history of the order in "Loretto" (The American Press, New York). This includes the romantic story of the foundation in the wilds of Kentucky by Father Neringer, interesting accounts of the first members and other persons distinguished in the order, and the story of its spread and of the educational institutions it has established.

To the literature of the present Presidential campaign Mr. William Bayard Hale contributes a life of "Woodrow Wilson" (Doubleday, Page and Company), in which he endeavors to make up in enthusiasm for the paucity of facts at his disposal. The career of a college professor is usually uneventful, and Prof. Wilson's did not differ from that of his fellows; he was elected president of Princeton. Mr. Hale is ready to cheer, however, at every step in it from the moment he was elected. He does not quite know what to do with the graduate

school row, however, and his account of Mr. Wilson's political life is very brief. Neither Col. Harvey nor Col. Watterson is mentioned.

### Some New Fiction.

The title story in Mr. Brand Whitlock's "The Fall Guy" (The Bobbs Merrill Company, Indianapolis), which is the most artistic in the collection despite its cruelly matter of fact ending, is the only one that deals with the underworld. The others for the most part read like incidents of real life, which the author often hardly shapes into story form and which all tell of abnegation in some form. Even when they come close to tragedy, which is not often, they are not depressing; neither does the author preach; he lets the facts speak for themselves. The stories touch on a great variety of subjects, they are well written, and the reader will congratulate himself that the author has turned from municipal cares to take up literature again.

There is extremely good work in Mary Elizabeth Smith's "In Bethany House" (Fleming H. Revell Company), though the connecting story is pretty lame and over sentimental. The descriptions of the Southern home and the young people in it are very pretty; the deplorable cases that settlement workers have to face are related with vividness and restraint. With the young women and their aims, however, we enter the realm of the ideal; they are all that settlement workers wish to be and the results they obtain are rather those that they desire than those of actual experience. The construction of the book is faulty; it should have been put in the form of a collection of sketches.

The greater part of Mr. Horace Amesley Vachell's "Blinds Down" (Hodder and Stoughton; George H. Doran Company) is delightful reading. The two principal women with their conventionalities, which the lively girl who wishes to discover the realities of life, are pictures out of "Crane" and these pleasing pictures are repeated for the benefit of the girl's young daughter. They throw into the background the tragedy with the moral that the author wishes to point. This leads to painful disregard of the Seventh Commandment, which the reader would pardon more readily if the partner were not a priggish bore, evidence of lack of taste in the young woman. Her story leads to a touching ending but the tragedy jars in a pretty, if artificial, tale told in the lightest of tones.

The history and legends of Provence and the Pyrenees border, which Caroline Atwater Mason has collected in "The Spell of France" (J. C. Page and Company), together with the enthusiastic descriptions and the hints for travelers, should have been put in the form of impressions of travel. Arranged in conversational form, talks between an affectionate husband and wife, each steadily pumping information into the other, the effect is rather ludicrous. Even a pretty love tale that is injected into the itinerary made the vehicle for information regarding the history and legends of Provence. The fiction that it is a diary is as clumsy as the mechanism of the main narrative. The travel part is interesting; it leads the reader occasionally out of the beaten path; why should the author try to disguise it?

In "The Minister of Police" (The Bobbs-Merrill Company) Mr. Henry Montjoy dresses up a detective story in Louis XV. costumes. It is not a brilliant story. The people are merely clothes to which historical names have been tagged; they naturally show no signs of intelligence. The hero and the heroine hardly excite the reader's sympathy; their cunningness would leave them in well merited trouble if the author had not chosen to make a clown of the police minister. There is much rudeness, which is intended for sprightly repartee. The author has put together the framework for a historical novel, but he has failed to put life in his puppets.

The mountaineers of the South have inspired Anna Alice Chapin to write "The Under Trail" (Little, Brown and Company), a love story which would have been much improved if the characters had decided definitely what her characters were to be. We expect stolidity in the calm, beautiful nurse, who is the heroine, for the author calls her heroine, and after she has fallen in love at first sight with the masterful hero and is apparently ready to sacrifice everything for him, are naturally surprised at her becoming engaged without reason to another young man, and at her withdrawal from her own wedding also. The mountaineers are bad and good by fit, according to the author's fancy, and so are the more civilized people. There are some picturesque scenes, in which the author seems carried away by the impulse of the moment, so that she forgets her original idea.

A political novel of Indiana is presented by Drew Tufts, with the title "Hiram Blair" (A. C. McClurg and Company). There is dialect in it and much political talk, but after creating the situations the author does not know what to do with them. It is crude, amateurish work. The one lesson it seems to teach is that in Indiana politics the inspiration lies neither in reform nor in party feeling but in the jealousy of the politicians and female relatives.

For one thing we are grateful to the authors of "On the Trail to Sunset" (Thomas W. and Agnes A. Wilby Moffat, Yard and Company). In their description of an automobile trip across the continent they have omitted the itinerary from New York to Chicago. Once west of the Mississippi they expatriate on the scenery, increasing in enthusiasm as they approach the Pacific coast. The account is interwoven with a love tale involving a villainous and treacherous New Mexican with a retinue of goons and half-breeds. He would have caused little trouble, however, if it were not for the dual nature of the heroine, who, in other chapters, is in love with him and the Spanish past and with the manly young journalist who is reporting the automobile trip. We confess to preferring to have our motoring and love-making kept separate.

### Other Books.

A fragment of aboriginal culture, a language that is almost dead, has been saved by the Smithsonian Institution's ethnologists. The material for the Boloji part of "A Dictionary of the Boloji and Old Languages" (Government Printing Office, Washington) was gathered by this late Dr. James Owen Dorsey. It has been put into shape and incorporated with his own discoveries by Mr. John R. Swanton. The two tribes were indigenous to the Louisiana lowlands; they were the Indians the French explorers first met and

their vocabulary may throw light on the early history. A number of folk tales in the original, with interesting and full translations are included, together with scientific explanations and notes. The monograph is Bulletin 47 of the Bureau of American Ethnology.

A good many amusing stories about professional men, most of them old friends but all with a good point, have been gathered by Mr. George H. Bruce in "Lawyers, Doctors and Preachers" (The Irvington Publishing Company, New York). It is a capital joke book.

The practice of publishing books about trips the author has enjoyed has extended to England. Mrs. Charlotte Cameron's "A Woman's Winter in South America" (Small, Maynard and Company, Boston) is an honest, if jejune, account of personal experiences, in which steamers and hotels made more impression than the places visited. The author went from England to Buenos Ayres, touching at the usual ports on the way, she crossed the continent by railroad to Valparaiso, sailed up the coast, stopping at several points, to Panama, where she inspected the canal, and returned home by way of the West Indies. She was singularly unobservant, for she only mentions important things, but it is always ready with slapdash judgments and a ready ob-servant's things are funny. The one interesting thing in the book is the portrait of the attractive author.

The paper bag method has reached the dignity of having a cook book of its own. "Standard Paper Bag Cookery," by Emma Paddock Telford (Cupples and Leon Company), is, we are told, "the first thoroughly American book" on the subject. The author is certainly clear in her explanation of the essentials of the art and conscientiously adapts each recipe to the exigencies of the new form of cooking.

The force of Mr. Arthur Judson Brown's "The Chinese Revolution" (Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, New York) would be much greater if his review of conditions were not colored so strongly by his views regarding missionary activity. With no criticism of the high purpose or of the good done by missionaries in China it must be clear to most men that the problems with which China is dealing now cannot be solved by Christianizing the people, even if that were possible. The "South American Problems" by Robert E. Spier, which the same institution publishes, suffers from the usual inability of Protestants to recognize that Catholics have equal rights to do Christian work. Both books are illustrated with fine photographs.

Another helpful little book for sportsmen by Mr. Horace Kephart is issued by the Outing Publishing Company. It deals in the author's usual clear manner, with "Sporting Firearms," both rifles and shot-guns. The attractive title of Mr. William C. Smith's "How to Grow One Hundred Bushels of Corn on One Acre on Worn Soils" (Stewart and Kidd Company) innocently, fully describes the book, which appears now in a new and enlarged edition. The gist of the method is the ploughing in of green crops to enrich the soil. The book is full of practical directions about the treatment of the soil, ploughing and the various plants which the author has tested. It is fully illustrated.

### Other Books.

"The Subways and Tunnels of New York," Gilbert H. Gilbert, Lucius L. Wightman and W. L. Saunders. (John Wiley and Sons, New York).

"Play Making," William Archer. (Small, Maynard and Company, Boston).

"The Story of His House," Mrs. Campbell Prager. (Cassell and Company, New York).

"The Lovers of Nanna," Mary Stewart Cutting. (McClure, Nast and Company, New York).

"Green Hills of Great Smoky Mountains," John Oxenham. (John Lane Company).

"The Romance of a State Secret," Winifred Trafford Taitton. (Dana Estes and Company, Boston).

"Fox Farm," Warwick Deeping. (Cassell and Company, London).

"No Surrender," Constance Elizabeth Maud. (John Lane Company).

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### PUBLISHERS' MISTAKE.

Justin McCarthy's Story of the Publication of His Best Known Work.

From the London Globe.

Mr. Justin McCarthy once told the story of "The History of Our Own Times." A well known firm of publishers hearing of the projected work offered to publish it on terms "highly acceptable." But when they heard that he was to stand as a Nationalist for North Londonderry they took alarm and desired to withdraw their offer if the report was true, in the belief that the English public would not read English history from the pen of a Nationalist M. P. The offer was withdrawn and, after some haggling, the publishers increased their offer of £20 as solatium to £100.

Mr. Andrew Chaito showed more courage and perseverance. He volunteered to publish the history, even if the author was returned to Parliament. The first two volumes were written, and met with such a welcome that they were in a third edition before a single review of them had appeared in the press.

When Mr. McCarthy entered Parliament a seventh edition was on sale, and on taking his seat Mr. Speaker Brand warmly congratulated him on the fact that "The History of Our Own Times" had reached a seventh edition.

Mr. McCarthy used to tell an amusing story about his "Reminiscences." In the small hours of the morning he was having a chat with one of the policemen at the House. The author inquired of his companion whether he liked reminiscences, to which the policeman replied: "Well, thank you kindly, sir, but you see the pubs ain't open yet."

### THE MAKERS OF BOOKS.

Two books of adventure laid in the South Seas are announced by Doubleday, Page & Co. for publication late in May. "A Son of the Sun," a series of character sketches by Jack London, and "Green Hills of Great Smoky Mountains," a novel by James Francis Twyman. On the same date will be published "The Merchant of Venice," the fourth volume of the "Ben Greer Shakespeare," "Fair Tales A Child Can Read and Act," by Lillian E. Nixon, and "Saturday in Mr. Garden," by E. H. Hedfield. Further additions to the large list of Garden of Nature books.

Announcement is made of the publication, for private circulation only, of John Muir's memorial to Edward H. Harriman under the title of "E. H. Harriman." The books cannot be bought, but a copy will be sent free to any librarian who will make application to the publishers, Doubleday, Page & Co.

Harper & Brothers announce the publication of three new books: "From the South of France," by Thomas A. Janvier, "Harper's Boating Book for Boys," in the Practical Book series, and "The Greatest English Classic," by the Rev. Cleland B. McAfee.

This week John Lane Company